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Langendorfer House
Frene Creek Valley
Hermann vicinity
Gasconade County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1758

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

LANGENDORFER HOUSE

HABS No. MO-1758

Location: Frene Creek Valley, 5 miles south of Hermann near Highway 100,
Hermann vicinity, Gasconade County, Missouri

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The following information was recorded by Alexander Piaget and Charles van Ravenswaay at the time the photograph was taken:

East half built 1848, west half somewhat later. Franz J. Langendoerfer (B. Baden, Germany about 1812). Emigrated to U.S. as a young man and worked as shoemaker in New York City, Philadelphia, and St. Louis before settling in Gasconade County in 1838. Purchased farm five miles south of Hermann where he lived until he was able to improve his farm and build a farmhouse. His wife Frederica Crossmann Langendoerfer, a native of Wurtemberg, emigrated to the U.S. with her parents in 1837, and married Franz. Their youngest son, August, lived with his parents on their farm until 1880 when he married Miss Lucia Caebler, daughter of Ernst Gaebler, and moved to another farm which he had purchased. (Goodspeed's History, 1098).

One and a half story house with basement of magnesian limestone quarried on the farm. Left half, with brick window lintels, is earliest portion of the house. Right half, with wooden window lintels, built "considerably later". The porch is original and typical of the area. The corrugated metal roof a modern innovation although the house may have had a tin roof at an early date.

On the interior, a fireplace is found in the main room in the left half of the house, with a walnut cupboard filling the space to the left of the chimney breast. Miss Masrtha F. Langendoerfer, the owner in 1961, said that this cupboard was built by Johann Bohlken of Hermann. Bohlken is listed in The Missouri State Gazetteer and Business Directory (St. Louis, 1860, pg. 116) as a "sash, blind, and door maker," at Hermann, Missouri.

The doors in the hallway, apparently original with their original hardware, are painted in two shades of red; in the sitting room they are painted two shades of green, presumably the original paint. The colors used on these doors are very similar to the paint colors found in Texas-German farmhouses of the same period as this one. Dark reds with a purple overtone; odd yellow-oranges, blue-greens, and others were popular. In Texas, as in this Missouri house, the combination of dark red and orange on a door was popular.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Miss Martha Fredericka Langendoerfer, granddaughter of the builder.
History of Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, Crawford, and Gasconade Counties,
Missouri, Goodspeed Publishing Company, Chicago, 1888. (Reprinted, The
Ramfre Press, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 1958).

PROJECT INFORMATION

The Piaget-van Ravenswaay Survey consists of a number of photographs,
primarily of sites and structures in Missouri, which were taken before 1938 by
Alexander Piaget and after that by Paul Piaget, both in conjunction with
Charles van Ravenswaay. Photographs of buildings were incorporated into the
HABS collection in 1985 by Laura Rupp and in 1986 by Deborah Fulton, HABS
historians. A master list is available in the [REDACTED] records for MO-1800.